

## Press Release National Labor Relations Board Office of the General Counsel

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## Election set between nursing unions at University of Chicago Medical Center

Competing unions that were once part of the same organization agreed to an election in which nurses at the University of Chicago Medical Center (UCMC) will choose between them. The bargaining unit involves about 1,200 registered nurses.

The election agreement brokered by the Chicago Regional Office was reached Monday, just hours before a hearing on the dispute was set to begin. The election is set for May 19 and 20.

The Illinois Nurses Association (INA) has been the representative of the UCMC nurses for more than 30 years. Its collective bargaining agreement expired in October 2009 and the parties have been negotiating for a successor contract since then.

In the meantime, INA's national union, United American Nurses (UAN), AFL-CIO, merged with other national unions to form the National Nurses United (NNU), AFL-CIO. The new national union claimed INA as an affiliate. But INA disagreed, and filed a lawsuit in federal court alleging that UAN violated its union constitution by entering into the merger.

In late March, NNU filed a petition to represent the UCMC nurses rather than INA, submitting signature cards as its required showing of interest. INA claimed that the NNU fraudulently obtained the cards by misrepresenting its intentions. After an investigation, Regional Director Joseph A. Barker decided in favor of the NNU, and a hearing was set on the petition.

The National Labor Relations Board is an independent federal agency vested with the power to safeguard employees' rights to organize and to determine whether to have unions as their bargaining representative. The agency also acts to prevent and remedy unfair labor practices committed by private sector employers and unions. The NLRB's Office of the General Counsel has independent prosecutorial discretion under the National Labor Relations Act to issue complaints alleging such unfair labor practices.